

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-34 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 14-18, 21 and 27 are amended. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims, and the drawings. Withdrawal of the rejections in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-11 and 16-34 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 3,520,568 to White et al. (hereinafter "White") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,082,787 to Chioffi et al. (hereinafter "Chioffi"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a dryer which includes an apparatus configured to releasably engage a door and a housing. The apparatus includes, *inter alia*, a pair of holders positioned in a latch body so as to confront each other, wherein the pair of holders is configured to releasably engage a hanging portion of a hook provided at one side of the door. Claim 1 recites that each of the pair of holders is configured to translate within the latch body so as to engage or disengage the hanging portion. Independent claim 27 recites similar features in varying scope. As acknowledged by the Examiner in the remarks regarding independent claims 1 and 27, White neither discloses nor suggests such features, or the respective claimed combinations of features. Further, Chioffi fails to overcome the deficiencies of White.

Chioffi discloses a device 1 for locking a door P of an appliance. The device 1 includes a support housing 2, and an engagement member A which is inserted into and removed from the

housing 2 through an aperture 3 in the housing 2, and which is rotatably coupled to the door P about a pin B. A retainer 4 slidably mounted in the housing 2 retains the engagement member A when the door P is closed.

When the door P is open, the retainer 4 is held in a rest position by a spring 6, and the appliance cannot be operated. When the door P is closed, the engagement member A is inserted into the aperture 3, and a hook portion 21 slides along an inclined surface 3a as the engagement member A rotates about the pin B until the corner of the hook 21 is caught by a corner of the aperture 3, thus compressing the spring 6. To open the door P, the engagement member A rotates in the opposite direction about the pin B, thus decompressing the spring 6 and pushing the engagement member A out through the aperture 3.

The housing 2 also includes upper and lower stops 8 and 9 which include corresponding locking projections 8a and 9a. When the door P is open and the retainer 4 is at rest, the locking projections 8a and 9a are aligned with notches 12 and 13, thus blocking access to the interior of the support housing 2 and preventing the retainer 4 from leaving the rest position. Insertion of the engagement member A forces the stops 8 and 9 apart, allowing the retainer 4 to move.

Chioffi clearly discloses that the stops 8 and 9 (compared in the Office Action to the recited holders), and in particular, the locking projections 8a and 9a, engage the retainer 4. Chioffi neither discloses nor suggests that the stops 8 and 9 in any way hold or engage the engagement member A and/or the hook portion 21 of the engagement member A (compared in the Office Action to the recited hook and hanging portion). Thus, Chioffi neither discloses nor

suggests a pair of holders, or at least one holder, configured to releasably hold a hanging portion as recited in independent claims 1 and 27, respectively.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 27 are allowable over the applied combination, and thus the rejection of independent claims 1 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over White and Chioffi should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2-11, 16-26 and 28-34 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1 and 27, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features.

The Office Action rejects claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over White and Chioffi in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,489,864 to Cravener (hereinafter "Cravener"). The Office Action also rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over White and Chioffi in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,480,862 to Fleming (hereinafter "Fleming"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 14 and 15 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features. Further, Cravener is merely cited as allegedly teaching the use of bolts, and Fleming is merely cited as allegedly teaching a fixing plate screw coupled to one side of a door jamb. Thus, Cravener and Fleming, either alone or in combination, fail to overcome the deficiencies of White and Chioffi. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 14 and 15 are allowable over the respective applied combinations, and thus the rejection of claims 14 and 15 should be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-9, 11-17 and 19-34 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over White

in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,869,952 to Saunders (hereinafter "Saunders"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The features of independent claims 1 and 27 are discussed above. As acknowledged by the Examiner in the remarks regarding independent claims 1 and 27, White neither discloses nor suggests all the features of these claims, or the respective claimed combinations of features. Further, Saunders fails to overcome the deficiencies of White.

Saunders discloses a door latch for a refrigerator, including a diamond shaped striker 29 which extends from a door 12 a latch casing 31. The latch includes a pair of retainers 36 each extending between a pair of pivot pins 38 and 39, with coil springs 47 surrounding each retainer 36. A U-shaped arm 41 is pivotably attached at the pivot pin 39, with rollers 42 and 44 at its opposite ends, thus allowing the arms 41 to pivot as the striker 29 is inserted into or removed from the latch and the springs 47 are extended or compressed. Saunders neither discloses nor suggests that the pivot pin 39, arms 41 and rollers 42, 44 (combined together and compared in the Office Action to the recited holders) translate within the latch, as recited in independent claims 1 and 27. Rather, Saunders clearly discloses that these elements work together to rotate about the pivot pin 39 and allow entry and removal of the striker 29. Thus, Saunders neither discloses a pair of holders, or at least one holder, which translates within the latch body so as to engage or disengage a hanging portion, as recited in independent claims 1 and 27, respectively.

Further, Saunders neither discloses nor suggests any type of support member which supports a rear portion of either of the springs 47, let alone in a manner in which the springs 47